

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

CHAPELLE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

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United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Chapelle Administration Building

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 1530 Hardin Street

Not for publication:___

City/Town: Columbia

Vicinity:___

State: SC

County: Richland

Code: 079

Zip Code:

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local:

Public-State:

Public-Federal:

Category of Property

Building(s): X

District:

Site:

Structure:

Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

1

Noncontributing

 buildings

 sites

 structures

 objects

 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register:___

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing:

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4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ____ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official_____
Date_____
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official_____
Date_____
State or Federal Agency and Bureau**5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ____ Entered in the National Register
____ Determined eligible for the National Register
____ Determined not eligible for the National Register
____ Removed from the National Register
____ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper_____
Date of Action

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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: EDUCATION Sub: College

Current: EDUCATION Sub: College

7. DESCRIPTIONArchitectural Classification: Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival

Materials:

Foundation:

Walls: Brick

Roof:

Other:

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Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The main campus of Allen University is located on the original tract of land on which it was established in the 1880's. The block is bounded by Taylor, Hampton, Pine and Harden Streets. Chapelle Administration Building faces Harden Street and remains on its original site. The building has changed very little from its original design. Chapelle was one of J.A. Lankford's major undertakings and clearly demonstrates his appreciation for optimum use of space and limited resources.

Construction was begun on Chapelle in 1922 and the structure was completed in 1925. The cost of construction was an astounding \$165,000. The building at the time of construction was the central building of the Allen University campus and its function has remained the same since that time. The basement to Chapelle contains a kitchen and dining hall, print shop and mail room. An assembly hall and administrative offices are located on the first floor while the second and third levels are composed of classrooms. The only change in the building's use has come with the removal of the library to a separate facility built expressly to house that collection.

Chapelle is a three story brick building with basement. The three stories of the front facade (facing Harden Street) have fourteen (14) bays each. There are five (5) gabled dormers on the hipped roof. The windows of the first three levels are all nine-over-nine double-hung sash. Over each of the windows of the first and second levels are keystones. The entrance is from Harden Street through a three arched portico with balustrade running continuously from the ground up along eight steps and around the portico. The top of the portico forms a sundeck with balustrade encircling it. There is a doorway in the same fashion as the windows on the second level topped by a triangular pediment. The double entrance door on the first floor has a semi-circular fanlight. Along the roofline, under the cornice is dentil molding. Chapelle is topped by a round cupola with clock and chimes. The original cupola was destroyed by lightening in 1974 but has been restored.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: X Statewide: Locally:

Applicable National

Register Criteria: A B C D

Criteria Considerations

(Exceptions): A B C D E F G

NHL Criteria: 1

NHL Theme(s): II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements
2. reform movementsAreas of Significance: Ethnic Heritage: Black
Architecture
Education

Period(s) of Significance: 1922-1925

Significant Dates:

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder: Lankford, John Anderson

Historic Contexts: XVI. Architecture
X. Vernacular

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State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

John Anderson Lankford rose through determination and dedication from meager beginnings to gain the title and position of "dean of black architects." Lankford, after receiving his formal education, returned the skills he acquired into service for his race. For many years he was an educator in mechanical arts and engineering, and he designed buildings, a field not generally open to blacks. Lankford combined his diversified background into his buildings carrying forth his philosophy that physical structures should be functional, practical, and beautiful. As the Official Architect of the AME Church, Lankford's abilities were placed, as he stated in his own words, in service to "our church, to our race, and to our God...."¹

BIOGRAPHY

John Anderson Lankford was born in Patosi, Washington County, Missouri in 1874 to Anderson and Nancy Lankford. Lankford's father was a farmer and miner who had owned his own property since the antebellum period. As one of five children, John was educated in the public schools of Patosi. At a very early age Lankford went to work while attending school. His first job was that of an apprentice to a German mechanic. A short time later, Lankford traveled to Jefferson City, Missouri where he met Professor Inman E. Page, principal of a local school. After noticing Lankford's academic ability Professor Page helped the young man gain admission to Lincoln Institute, presently Lincoln University.

A superior student at Lincoln, Lankford's college courses traversed the spectrum of the curriculum to include courses in: mechanical drawing, engineering, carpentry, machinery, blacksmithing as well as the classics, history, English, mathematics and the applied sciences. Upon graduation Lankford moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where he worked as a blacksmith and later became part owner of the shop. Lankford's reputation grew steadily and as a result his name was brought to the attention of Booker T. Washington.

At the invitation of Washington, Lankford went to Tuskegee to work and to study. Lankford took complete advantage of this opportunity. Since Tuskegee was a mechanical and industrial school, he specialized in mechanical engineering, mechanical drawing, plumbing and machinery. Lankford was graduated from three Tuskegee departments in 1896 winning high academic honors and the personal praise of Booker T. Washington.

Following graduation from Tuskegee, Lankford remained at that school for the next school term and taught courses in mechanical engineering. In 1897 he went to Atlanta, Georgia, where he was employed as chief blacksmith and steam fitter for the Fulton Bag and Cotton Company. However, Lankford was not satisfied with his position and consequently accepted a position at the Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical College (Alabama A and M) in Normal, Alabama.

At Alabama A&M Lankford was supervisor of the machine shop, saw mill and laundry. Also at this time he designed and supervised the construction of Palmer Hall, an office and classroom building on the campus. Dr. William H. Council, president of the institution, called him the ablest and most satisfactory mechanical arts teacher the school had ever had. Also while at Alabama A&M Lankford installed the School's industrial power plant.

¹Address of J. A. Lankford, "Our Stewardship" in J. A. Lankford Artistic Churches and Other Designs, 1st edition, p. 11 .

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After three years at Alabama A&M Lankford received a position as head of the Industrial Department at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. While at Shaw he was responsible for the complete reorganization of the department, gaining laudatory support from the president of the institution, Dr. Charles Meserve. He said that Lankford was the best professor and mechanic he had ever known. It was while in North Carolina that Lankford was retained by the Honorable W. C. Coleman to design a machine shop for the Coleman Cotton Mills in Concord, North Carolina. Lankford went further than Mr. Coleman could ever have expected. He designed, not only the housing facility but was also responsible for the installation of \$100,000 worth of machinery. By this endeavor Lankford found an outlet for his work in private business. All of his adult life, to this point, had been dedicated to the education of black youth.

By 1901 Lankford had gained a highly respected reputation on the east coast and had designed buildings in Missouri, Alabama, North Carolina and Georgia. In 1902 Lankford made the two most important moves of his life. First was his marriage to Charlotte Upshaw granddaughter of Bishop Henry McNeal Turner of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. To this union was born one child, Josephine Lankford. His second decision was to move with his new bride to the Nation's Capital.

Soon after his arrival in Washington Lankford acquired his first commission. He was recommended to the members of the United Order of True Reformers who were seeking a black architect to design their grand lodge building. Lankford's plans were unanimously selected by the officers of the organization. The first project in the country to be financed, designed, and built completely by blacks, the True Reformer's Hall was completed by June 30, 1903. This endeavor established Lankford as an exceptional architect and won for him a great deal of national recognition.

From his architectural offices in Washington, D.C., Lankford did some of his most outstanding work. Throughout the Washington, Maryland, and Virginia areas, Lankford designed fashionable homes for the prominent black professional of the time. Yet, the black architect was to create a more notable name for himself in the design and construction of churches.

Lankford believed that blacks should build their own churches, designed to fit the needs of the congregation rather than to purchase old church buildings vacated by whites. He pointed out that the original construction of buildings was both more practical and economical in the long run than occupying a previously occupied structure. Gaining the support of Bishop Turner, his wife's grandfather, Lankford succeeded in convincing the AME Church that the present body needed an official architect. In 1908 at the Quadrennial Conference, he was elected Church Architect and Supervisor of AME buildings. He would not accept any monetary compensation for his advice and expertise in church matters. As Lankford explained about this position, "We think this our simple and common duty to our church, to our race, and to our God, and we neither expect nor ask any special favor from either God or man for that which we have attempted to do."² In these plans he incorporated his belief that a good church edifice should meet the practical as well as the spiritual needs of the congregation. Lankford, therefore, included in his church plans provisions for a sanctuary and a social hall. And as an aid to the church, Lankford provided booklets about the construction of the building and about its maintenance.

In this capacity as church architect of the AME Church, Lankford traveled throughout the south and west. He designed one of the largest churches owned by blacks, St. Phillip's AME Church in Savannah, Georgia. Other church edifices designed by Lankford include: Grant Memorial AME Church, Jacksonville, Florida; St. John

²Letters of Booker T. Washington in J. A. Lankford Artistic Churches and Other Designs, 2nd edition, p. 5.

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AME Church, Washington, D C.; Larkin Chapel, Apex, North Carolina; St. Andrews AME Church, Palmetto, Florida; Bethel AME Church, Malvern, Arkansas; Ebenezer Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Indiana; and numerous other structures throughout the country. In this position he was also responsible for repairs on the churches as well as designing them.

Lankford's abilities were not restricted solely to black churches. His plans for the white Presbyterian church in Patosi, Missouri, his hometown, were chosen from a competition in which all of the other architects were white. Representative N. E. Rhodes of Missouri's Thirteenth Congressional District wrote a testimonial letter congratulating Lankford and commending him on the quality of the church's designs. The Congressman stated that the church was considered to be one of the finest in the entire state.

Lankford took pride in his profession. His office in Washington, D.C. had the most modern equipment available and an extensive technical library. His advertisements in the *Washington Bee* ran as follows:

J. A. Lankford, Architect and Builder, 32 months in D.C., has done over \$500,000 worth of work in D. C. and vicinity of every description. We make a specialty of church and hall designs and arranging loans. We also specialize in the building up of vacant lots in the District of Columbia.³

About 1910 Lankford returned to teaching, accepting a position at Wilberforce University in Ohio. While there he developed a new process to develop blue prints and also discovered a chemical to weld the hardest steel. Lankford is also credited with being one of the promoters of the growth and expansion of Harvard University's School of Engineering and Architecture. His portrait presently hangs in the building of the School of Engineering.

Lankford's concern for the education of blacks is demonstrated in the many school buildings which he designed and the numerous colleges in which he taught. Outstanding among these are the Central Park Normal and Industrial Park Normal and Industrial Institute in Savannah, Georgia and the Chapelle Administration, Dining Hall and Auditorium Building of the Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina.

Active in black improvement organizations Lankford helped found the National Technical Association, serving as its first president. He was a member of the National Negro Business League, a True Reformer, a Thirty-Third Degree Mason, and a Trustee of the AME Church. He received honorary degrees from Shaw University, Wilberforce University, Allen University, and Morris Brown College.

John Anderson Lankford died after a lengthy illness on July 2, 1946 in Washington, D.C. Through Lankford's many diversified activities he gained the respect of many of his contemporaries and through his pioneering efforts became known as the "dean of black architects."

³*Washington Bee*

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Catalogue of Allen University, Columbia, South Carolina. 1922, 1925.

Gordon, Asa H. Sketches of Negro Life and History in South Carolina, Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1929.

Howard, J.D. "John Anderson Lankford Architect and Builder," ND. NP.

Lankford, John Anderson. Artistic Churches and Other Designs, Washington, DC: Hamilton Printing Company, 1923 (2nd Edition).

Newby, I.A. Black Carolinians, A History of Blacks in South Carolina, From 1865 to 1968, Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1973.

South Carolina Inventory of Historic Places, Allen University Historic District, prepared by Nenie Dixon and Pat Landholt, January 26, 1975.

Washington Bee, 1902.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ Previously Listed in the National Register.
- ☐ Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.
- ☐ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
- ☐ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #
- ☐ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other (Specify Repository):

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	17	498060	3763150

Verbal Boundary Description:

Chapelle Administration Building is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Taylor and Harden Streets facing Harden Street. Beginning at a point approximately ten feet south of Chapelle Administration Building, proceed in a northerly direction along the east curb of Harden Street 60 feet, thence east along the south curb of Taylor Street to a point ten feet east of Chapelle, thence south approximately 60 feet, thence west to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary includes the building historically known as the Chapelle Administration Building, on the campus of Allen University, which has maintained historic integrity.

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: Lynn Gomez Graves
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DESIGNATED A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
December 08, 1976